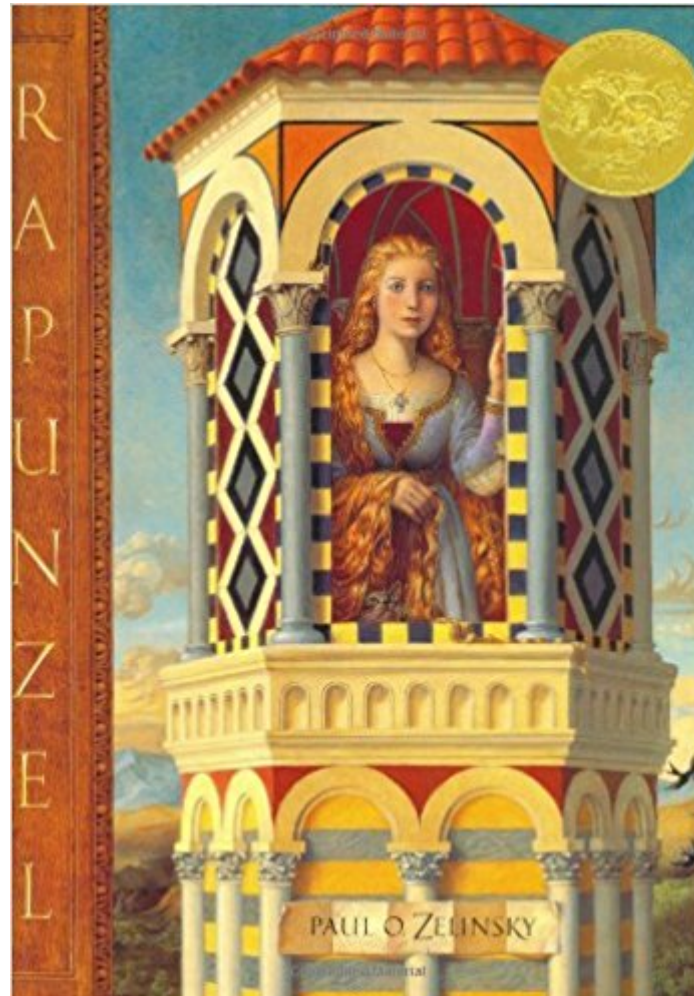




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# Rapunzel (Caldecott Medal Book)



## Synopsis

Surely among the most original and gifted of children's book illustrators, Paul O. Zelinsky has once again with unmatched emotional authority, control of space, and narrative capability brought forth a unique vision for an age-old tale. Few artists at work today can touch the level at which his paintings tell a story and exert their hold. Zelinsky's retelling of Rapunzel reaches back beyond the Grimms to a late-seventeenth-century French tale by Mlle. la Force, who based hers on the Neapolitan tale Petrosinella in a collection popular at the time. The artist understands the story's fundamentals to be about possessiveness, confinement, and separation, rather than about punishment and deprivation. Thus the tower the sorceress gives Rapunzel here is not a desolate, barren structure of denial but one of esoteric beauty on the outside and physical luxury within. And the world the artist creates through the elements in his paintings the palette, control of light, landscape, characters, architecture, interiors, costumes speaks to us not of an ugly witch who cruelly imprisons a beautiful young girl, but of a mother figure who powerfully resists her child's inevitable growth, and of a young woman and man who must struggle in the wilderness for the self-reliance that is the true beginning of their adulthood. As ever, and yet always somehow in newly arresting fashion, Paul O. Zelinsky's work thrillingly shows us the events of the story while guiding us beyond them to the truths that have made it endure.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD700L (What's this?)

Series: Caldecott Medal Book

Hardcover: 48 pages

Publisher: Dutton Books for Young Readers; 1 edition (October 1, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0525456074

ISBN-13: 978-0525456070

Product Dimensions: 9.4 x 0.4 x 12.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 110 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #126,368 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #140 in [Books > Children's](#)

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Age Range: 5 - 8 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 3

## Customer Reviews

In older versions of the classic tale Rapunzel, it always seemed improbable that a grown man could scale a tower using only his beloved's hair. Not so in Paul O. Zelinsky's Caldecott Medal-winning version of Rapunzel. Here, Rapunzel's reddish-blond mane is thick with waves and braids, and cascades like a waterfall down the walls of her isolation tower. In Zelinsky's able hands it's easy to believe that a prince would harbor no hesitations about scrambling up our fair heroine's hair. Of course, this is not the work of an amateur--Zelinsky's lush versions of Hansel and Gretel, Rumpelstiltskin, and Swamp Angel all earned him Caldecott Honors. His gorgeous, Italian Renaissance-styled illustrations are characterized by warm golden tones and the mesmerizing sensation of *trompe l'oeuil*. Not only does he have the touch of a world-class illustrator, Zelinsky has also proven himself a master storyteller. We are frightened when the sorceress demands to take the baby Rapunzel, we are alarmed when the flowing locks are cruelly shorn, and we rejoice when the prince and his now modest-haired love are reunited. The notes at the back of Rapunzel reveal his careful scholarship regarding the long history of the story (tracing its origins and transformations from Italy to France and finally to Germany and the Grimm brothers)--work that no doubt contributed to his clean, compelling version of the age-old tale. Children will be captivated by the magical story and evocative pictures and adults will delight in the fresh feel of a well-loved legend. (Click to see a sample spread. Illustration © 1997 by Paul O. Zelinsky, published by Dutton Children's Books, a division of Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers.) (Ages 4 and older)

In our Best Book citation, PW said, "A breathtaking interpretation gives the fairy tale new art-historical roots, with illustrations that daringly-and effectively-mimic the masters of Italian Renaissance painting." Ages 5-up. (Oct.) Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Beautiful illustrations! The pictures are wonderful. However, the story seems long for a picture book. Additionally, when the Prince visits Rapunzel, they supposedly marry by saying vows to each other and Rapunzel gets pregnant. I have an issue with this type of marriage included in a book for young children and the subsequent pregnancy. When reading it to my 7th grade class, in a very conservative suburb, they all made a big deal about that. Thankfully no parent calls. Again, it

seemed out-of-place for a book geared to children.

I don't know if is lumping reviews of books with the same title together, but some of the reviews don't match with the book that I purchased (by Paul O. Zelinsky). Rapunzel does become pregnant, but only after she and the prince marry in the tower. The sorceress is angry, cuts her hair, and throws her out of the tower. She then tricks and injures the prince, who, despite having been blinded, goes to search for his wife (it does specify wife). Rapunzel gives birth to twins, the prince finds them, her tears cure his blindness, and they all return to his kingdom to live happily ever after. The raciest it gets is to talk about their (first Rapunzel's mother, then Rapunzel) dresses getting tight at the waist followed by the woman in question having a baby or babies. There are no illustrations of the women with pregnant bellies, and both women are married when the children were conceived. It is a lovely story with beautiful illustrations!

Nice edition with beautiful illustrations recalling Italian Renaissance paintings - and filled with little details to be discovered by parent and child together.

The art in this book is simply beautiful, very stylized as you can see from the cover, and intricate. The story follows the classic story of Rapunzel. I bought it as a part of a series of purchases of beautifully illustrated children's books to read to my highly verbal 3 1/2 year old. The story is the perfect length, but the some of the pictures are capturing such drama that it's really a bit too much. For example, when the old witch swoops down on the young husband, her face is really rather scary. Which of course makes sense, but not for a sensitive child. Also, the story doesn't shy away from the original where the prince who climbs up actually really terrifies Rapunzel, who has never seen a man before. Again, the illustration shows her terror, and I didn't really want to try to explain it to my child. So, yes, it's a beautiful book and very "classic" as it follows the story, but too intense for younger readers.

When our daughter was young she frequently took this book out the library. The illustrations are so beautiful that she was happen to find it available now that she is an adult.

I'm amazed by Zelinsky's gift at art! The tower (that tall, slender thing doesn't look very believable to me) doesn't really impress me, but that's just a minor complaint that I have (aside from that Rapunzel and her prince could have gotten to know each other before the marriage). This book

shows the two sides of Rapunzel's adoptive mother well. You can see the love for her "daughter" in one picture and then the anger of a demon as catches Rapunzel's biological father stealing more of her plants and as she learns of Rapunzel's relationship with the prince. The fact that Rapunzel was given away by her pregnancy is much more realistic than by a moment of forgetfulness; she'd know better than to do that with the sorceress around. The prince and Rapunzel actually look quite natural and beautiful (the Renaissance setting suits them), much better looking than the rather fluffy and overdone Barbie and Ken version. Fairy tale heroes and heroines too often seem to be modeled after Ken and Barbie. Zelinsky's representation of them is quite refreshing; not these stiff cardboard-cutout stock characters, but showing much more personality than usual. To me, it's very reminiscent of the Leonard Whitting/Olivia Hussey version of Romeo and Juliette. And what hair Rapunzel has! Wonderfully thick! It's beautifully painted and colored! Red-gold looks better for Rapunzel to me than Barbie's tow-colored "hair". And Rapunzel's cat in the background is rather nice touch (being a cat-lover, myself). Paul Zelinsky can't cease to amaze me with his artwork. And he's totally humanized the story! The characters have more depth and personality than they are usually portrayed having. The text and images he uses to do so are simply exquisite. Aside from his gift at art, he also knows how to use words. A commendable gift.

It can be hard to find fairy tales for young children that haven't been put through the Disney machine and altered beyond recognition; the authentic versions are often old and lack colorful illustrations. Paul O. Zelinsky's "Rapunzel" is absolutely gorgeous, and stays true to the original story. This does lead to one awkward moment, however, when Rapunzel's dress is no longer fitting properly and her wicked stepmother realizes that she has been spending time with a man. My 7-year-old son was lost, obviously not able to make the connection between the prince's visits and Rapunzel's expanding waistline! Most kids will need it explained that Rapunzel is going to have a baby. Other than that small hiccup, this book is a beautiful way to share the authentic story of Rapunzel with young children. A book that should be in every child's bookshelf.

Beautiful pictures. I bought this book because my daughter loves Rapunzel the movie, and I wanted her to have a chance to experience the original story. This book does an excellent job of retelling and illustrating this classic tale.

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